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REMARKS

A Request for Continued Examination (RCE) under 37 CFR §1.114 of the above-identified application is being filed herewith. This Amendment is responsive to the Official Action dated April 1, 2003. This Amendment is being timely filed in view of the fact that a One (1) Month Petition for Extension of Time to respond to the Official Action is being filed herewith.

Claim 60 has been amended to recite that the body portion of the fiber coupling assembly is configured and arranged to transmit light, and that a planar mirror is encapsulated within the body to reflect the light traveling within the body. This amendment is fully supported by the specification, particularly at page 13, lines 19-23; pages 14-16; and Figures 8a, 9 and 10. No new matter has been added to the specification.

Rejection of Claim 60 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Official Action states that claim 60 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over DeAndrea et al., U.S. Patent 5,515,468 ("DeAndrea") in view of Albaugh et al., U.S. Patent 4,346,294 ("Albaugh"). It is submitted that the present invention, as recited in amended claims 60, is not prima facie obvious over the combination of DeAndrea and Albaugh for the reasons discussed below.

Applicants agree with the Examiner that DeAndrea discloses an optical device package comprising a substrate with a surface mounted optoelectronic device, and a mirror for changing the direction of the light. However, as the Examiner recognizes, DeAndrea does not disclose or suggest an optically transparent fiber coupling assembly that encapsulates an optoelectronic device and mirror.

Turning to Albaugh, this reference discloses a modular package containing a substrate having a surface mounted optoelectronic device. Referring to FIG. 3, Albaugh teaches a modular package with an optical connector (14) carrying an optical fiber (15) through the

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package wall. The optical fiber (15) is thus introduced into the package in a plane that is substantially parallel to the substrate (11). A substantially ninety degree bend is introduced in the optic fiber (15) to permit light coupling between the optic fiber (15) and surface mounted optoelectronic device (10). A portion (141) of the optical connector (14) is adapted to accept an optical fiber, light transmission line which mates with optical fiber (15) at a junction (143) in the connector (14). (col. 3, lines 47-54 and col. 4, lines 1-53).

However, Albaugh does not teach an optical package, where light is transmitted through the body of a fiber coupling assembly, and wherein the body has an encapsulated planar mirror to reflect the transmitted light as recited in amended claim 60 as set forth above.

The Examiner takes the position that the optical fiber (15) in Albaugh is functionally equivalent to the use of a mirror, because both are used to redirect light between the optoelectronic device and input fiber optic cable.

It is submitted that the optical fiber (15) does not function as a planar mirror for reflecting light traveling through the body of a fiber coupling assembly as recited in amended claim 60. Rather, the optical fiber (15) in Albaugh and planar mirror element in amended claim 60 are completely different components having distinctive functions.

Particularly, Albaugh discloses that the optical fiber (15) has a central core (16) with a glass cladding (17) and that the outer surface of the fiber can be metallized (18) to provide a mirror-like interface between the cladding (17) and metallized layer (18). According to Albaugh, "any light which is now introduced or which escapes into the cladding (17) is retained within the cladding by the reflective interface (19) at its outer surface." (col. 5, lines 20-25).

Thus, Albaugh teaches an assembly, where light transmitted through the optical fiber is reflected internally and does not escape to the body of the assembly. The light is transmitted through the optical fiber core and glass cladding (col. 5, lines 53-55). In sharp

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contrast to the present invention, the light in Albaugh is not transmitted through the body of a fiber coupling assembly, and there is no suggestion in Albaugh for using a planar mirror to reflect the light traveling through the body portion.

Thus, even if a person of ordinary skill in the art combined the teachings of Albaugh and DeAndrea, the present invention still would not be obvious. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 60 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

In summary, Applicants submit that the claim presented for consideration herein is patentable and each of the Examiner's rejections and objections has been overcome. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and allowance of claim 60 (as amended).

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional required fee in connection with the filing of this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 02-0900. Should there be any outstanding matter that needs to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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